

UBC's admissions process is changing in 2019

UBC is changing how we decide who receives an offer of admission to study here. You'll still need to meet UBC's general and degree-specific admission requirements for Canadian high schools or international high schools – those haven't changed. And you should still focus on your achievements beyond academics. What's changing is how UBC will evaluate your courses and grades.

How exactly is the admissions process changing?

In the past, UBC looked at your grades in a limited number of academic Grade 11 (junior level) and Grade 12 (senior level) courses. Starting in 2019, we'll consider all Grade 11 (junior level) and Grade 12 (senior level) classes in the admissions decision and look at academic factors beyond grades too.

Who will be affected by these changes?

If you are a Grade 11 (junior level) student, or any student hoping to enter UBC directly from secondary school in September 2019 or beyond, these changes will apply to you. If you are transferring to UBC from another post-secondary institution, such as a university or college, these changes do not apply to you.

Why is UBC making these changes?

The goal of the changes to UBC's admissions process is to take a more holistic approach to evaluating your academic profile and to foster greater equity in admissions decisions among all applicants.

Will these changes make it more difficult to gain admission to UBC?

No. These changes will not impact how many students UBC admits.

Course selection

If I'm starting Grade 12 (senior year) in 2018, do I need to change which courses I'm taking?

No. The general and degree-specific requirements for admission to UBC's undergraduate degrees have not changed. You are not required to take more courses or different courses than before.

Will I have to take more courses under UBC's new admissions process?

No. We're recommending that you take at least six academic or non-academic Grade 12 (senior level) courses. There is no longer an approved course list – any Grade 12 (senior level) course you take can count towards your six. Note: If you're graduating from a secondary school outside of Canada, the recommended minimum number of senior-level courses will vary.

Does it matter which six Grade 12 (senior level) courses I choose?

Yes. Choosing courses that are academic in nature and/or are related to what you want to study at UBC may increase your chances of gaining admission to UBC.

What does UBC consider an academic course?

Academic courses fall within one of six subject categories: Language Arts, Mathematics and Computation, Sciences, Second Languages (including immersion programs), Social Studies, and Visual and Performing Arts. Applied design, skills, and technologies courses; career education courses; physical and health education courses; and faith-based courses are not considered academic courses. Regardless of where you go to school, you can refer to the BC Ministry of Education website for examples of courses in each category.

If I don't have at least six Grade 12 (senior level) courses, can I still be admitted to UBC?

Yes. Be sure to explain why you took a reduced course load in your application. We'll review each situation on a case-by-case basis.

Is there a minimum number of courses required for the core academic assessment?

No. You are not required to take a certain number of courses, or to take courses from every degree-specific subject category related to the degree that you applied to at UBC, but you are encouraged to challenge yourself.

Admissions decisions

How will UBC be evaluating my courses and grades?

UBC will evaluate your courses and grades in several ways. For the overall academic assessment, we'll look at your overall performance as a student. For the core academic assessment, we'll look at your potential for the particular degree you've applied to. For the individual course assessment, we'll look at your grades in individual courses that are particularly relevant to what you intend to study at UBC.

Will UBC look at my grades in all of my Grade 11 (junior level) and Grade 12 (senior level) courses?

No. All courses can play a role in our admissions decision, but we'll only look at your grades in academic Grade 11 (junior level) and Grade 12 (senior level) courses. If you've taken a course at the Grade 11 (junior) and Grade 12 (senior) levels, emphasis will be placed on your mark in the Grade 12 (senior level) course.

Will UBC look at more than my grades?

Yes. In addition to grades, UBC will also consider the breadth, rigour, and relevancy of your Grade 11 (junior level) and Grade 12 (senior level) coursework. If you challenge yourself in school by taking more courses – academic or not – it shows that you're able to handle a large course load. Similarly, it can also be worthwhile to take a non-academic course if it's related to what you want to study at UBC (e.g., taking Physical Education when applying to Kinesiology).

I'd like to take more and/or more rigorous courses, but I can't. Will I be penalized?

No. We understand that it isn't always possible. Maybe you have family or work commitments, like caring for a younger sibling or working a part-time job to fund your education. Or maybe you live in a small community and your high school doesn't offer Calculus, Advanced Placement (AP), or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses. Be sure to explain your circumstances in your application. We'll review each situation on a case-by-case basis.

Will UBC be publishing the average marks required for each degree?

No. A holistic admissions process means that many different factors – not just grades – will be considered when making an admissions decision.

So what's better: getting high grades, taking more courses, taking more challenging courses, or taking more courses related to what I want to study at UBC?

All of the above – in addition to a strong Personal Profile – can be useful. Many students will still gain admission to UBC based primarily on their marks in academic courses, but getting the highest grades in the fewest number of required classes is no longer the only way to show that you're ready to study here. Demonstrating breadth, rigour, and relevancy in your coursework is not a requirement for admission, but it certainly can help.